SPECIAL ADVISER
EASTERN HEMISPHERE
FEB 26 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 2[illegible] 1944
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

A I R G R A M

Dispatched:

FROM:
Cairo, Egypt
Dated: February 9, 1944

Received: Feb 22 - 11a

Secretary of State,
Washington

A-65, February 9, 9 a.m.

new
767n.83

767N.83/1

The Finance Minister of Egypt, Amin Osman Pasha, on February 5 presented a note to the Council of Ministers which states in substance: In November 1943 the Palestinian Government presented a proposal for holding a meeting of delegates of the Egyptian and Palestinian Governments with the purpose of facilitating exchanges between the two countries. This proposal said that the Congress would occupy itself with the abovementioned without seeking to enter into commercial arrangements with other countries of the Middle East and the meetings should be as far as possible non-official in as much as personal conversations would have a great influence in solving the numerous problems facing the two countries.

It was therefore proposed that the first meeting should take place the 17 of February at Jerusalem and that the meetings would last for seven days. It is understood that the Council of Ministers have approved Amin Osman's note and will proceed with the nomination of delegates. Local comment on this matter points out that as the present government of Palestine is simply that of the mandatory power and that Amin Osman is reputed to be a British instrument, the purpose of these meetings may have something to do with the approaching term mentioned in the British White Paper on Palestine calling for the cessation of Jewish

PS/AA

note
867n.01

immigration

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MAR 1 - 1944

immigration at the end of March, 1944. According to this comment it is suspected that the purpose of the meetings may be to induce the Palestine Arabs to accept the conclusions of the White Paper.

As soon as delegates to this rather unusual and rather vague congress are nominated, the personalities chosen may throw some light on the matter.

Kirk

HAD/rq

Copy to Jerusalem.

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EH

SPECIAL ADVISER
EASTERN HEMISPHERE
FEB 26 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JW

Despatched:

FROM:
Cairo Legation
February 15, 1944

Rec'd. Feb 22 -

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 23 1944
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-75, February 15, 5 p.m.

767n.83/1

767N.83/2

767n.83

With reference to my airgram A-65, February 9, 9 a.m., the composition of the delegation proceeding to Palestine for commercial negotiations has now been announced. In addition to the Ministers of Finance, Agriculture and Commerce, it will include Dr. Aly Choucha, Undersecretary for Health; Amin Fikri Bey, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Supplies; Ahmed Selim Bey, Financial Secretary of the Minister of Finance; Dr. Hussein Topozade, Sub-director for Industry; Dr. M. A. Rifaat, Director of Import Permits and two well known merchants Messrs. Georges Diab and Charles Castro.

The group chosen is composed of technicians which appears to confirm the commercial character of the mission, although it seems very high powered in comparison with the limited results to be expected. One of the commercial secretaries of the British Embassy in Cairo will accompany the mission which bears the mark of British sponsorship in its makeup. Mr. Richardson, British member of the MESC, will also go as an observer.

PS/MO

There is, of course, the problem of disposing of the products of new Palestinian industries once the war demands have decreased and the Middle East Supply Center is known to be interested in creating greater interchange of goods between the countries of this area.

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FEB 29 1944

The Egyptian delegation leaves for Palestine on the 16th and the talks, expected to continue over a week, will begin the following day. Copy to Jerusalem.

Kirk

K.D/lw

AIRGRAM

Despatched

FROM
Cairo Legation
February 24, 1944.
REC'D: Mar 1-5

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
MAR 3
DIVISION OF
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EASTERN HEMISPHERE
DIVISION
MAR 6 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-111, February 24, 6 p.m.

767n.83/2

767N.83/3

767n.83

note
667n.8331

With reference to my airgram A-75, February 15, 5 p.m. the Egyptian delegation for the Palestine talks on commercial exchanges has finished its visit and returned to Cairo today. During the week the Egyptian press has given a large amount of space to the exchanges of views so far as they were available as the business sessions seem to have been carried on behind closed doors.

From references to the work of the conference made in speeches at banquets and receptions the principal emphasis has been on the possibility of exchanging Palestine production of oranges and manufactures, particularly pharmaceutical products, for Egyptian sugar and rice. Four sub-commissions were appointed to study and report on medical supplies, heavy industry, light industry and foodstuffs. The conclusions of these sub-commissions were not published. Another item treated was the matter of facilitating passport control to permit freer movement of recommended persons between the two countries. The matter of transport tariffs was also taken up.

The Egyptian press has treated the meetings largely as an Anglo-Arab affair. The only mention made of the Jewish population of Palestine was a short quotation from the Hebrew paper Haolam which pointed out the mutual advantages to be gained in strengthening the economic bonds between the two countries. The Egyptian Finance Minister, Amin Osman Pasha, speaking at the Anglo-Arab Club of Jaffa pointed up this aspect by saluting the recent creation of the club and is reported to have "warmly pleaded in favor of stronger ties between Great Britain and the Arabs."

PS/MO

MAR 1 1944
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MAR 9 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

File

Although Arab affairs were not on the agenda and the delegation was composed of technicians, it is

apparent

apparent that individual delegates took the opportunity of discussing these matters in private. Various Arab notables of Palestine without ostensible connection with the talks visited the delegation, which also took a short side trip to Trans-Jordan. Mahmoud Soliman Ghannam, Egyptian Minister of Commerce and Industry, speaking at a tea offered by the Municipality of Jaffa is reported to have stated that "Nahas Pasha has worked and is working still in order that Palestine should obtain its full rights. Although Nahas Pasha has not mentioned it himself, his efforts will soon be revealed" declared the Minister.

In reply to the question of a reporter who met the returning ministers at Cairo as to whether there had been question of the Arab Union the Finance Minister stated: "The question of Arab union was not treated directly for it was not within the competence of the delegation. But, as economic exchanges are at the basis of the Arab union, the conversations of Jerusalem may be considered as a manifestation of that union."

The Minister of Commerce, as in Palestine, went slightly further in reply to the same question. "Although our mission was particularly interested in economic questions, I profited by my stay in Palestine to study the situation personally, above all concerning the hopes of the Palestinians in the Arab union. I saw that all Palestine counts greatly on the efforts exerted by Nahas Pasha on this subject."

Kirk

Repeated to Jerusalem.

HAL/rq

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TELEGRAM RECEIVED

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL POLICY
APR 11 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

FROM

EOC-196

PLAI

Cairo

Dated April 5, 1944

Rec'd 4:37 p.m.

TS OFFICE OF SPECIAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS 250
APR 13 1944
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
File NTC

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
APR 6 1944
DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

Secretary of State,

Washington.

815,5th.

767N.83/3

767N.83/4

Legation airgram 111, February 24.

767N.83 noted to 667N.8331

Press today published statement signed by Egyptian Minister of Commerce and Industry and by Walsh Chairman of Palestine Delegation to recent Egypt Palestine Economic Conference which summarized results of conference as embodies in agreement signed at Jerusalem in February and now approved by Egyptian Cabinet.

Agreement, full text of which will be forwarded by airmail, is reported to state that visa formalities between Egypt and Palestine should be reduced to minimum in order to facilitate trade; that goods exported from one country to the other should be disposed of at price which will yield fair return to producer while assuring consumer of maximum advantage from differnce in price levels; that goods established

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APR 15 1944

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to be in transit to specified consignee in specified country adhering to Allied cause should be allowed unimpeded passage to such destination and that every effort should be made to stimulate exchange between two countries of a series of goods listed in agreement consisting chiefly of chemicals and other industrial products from Palestine and of bran flour, waste molasses, rice starch and certain textiles from Egypt.

Conference recommended establishment of small standing committee to deal with details relative to proposed exchange or products.

KIRK

MRM

Central File: Decimal File 767N.83, Political Relations Of States, Relations; Bi-Lateral Treaties., Palestine And Egypt, February 9, 1944 - April 5, 1944. February 9, 1944 - April 5, 1944. MS Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States: Records of the U.S. Department of State, 1930-1944: Records of the Department of State Relating to Political Relations of Turkey, Greece, and the Balkan States, 1940-1944. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com%2Fapps%2Fdoc%2FSC5111395958%2FGDSC%3Fu%3Domni%26sid%3Dbookmark-GDSC. Accessed 23 June 2025.